

‘Some New Eastern Gingers’ – a Paper by H.N. Ridley Containing Descriptions of Four Species Overlooked since their Publication in 1900

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Abstract

Attention is drawn to four Malesian species of ginger (*Alpinia pectinata*, *Alpinia celebica*, *Amomum terminale* and *Tapeinochilos koordersianus*) validly published by H.N. Ridley in 1900 that do not appear in *Index Kewensis*. We lectotypify *Alpinia pectinata* Ridl., a new synonym of *Alpinia eremochlamys* K. Schum. *Alpinia celebica* Ridl. pre-dates Schumann's use of the same combination.

Introduction

In the July 1900 issue of the *Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, there appeared on pages 97–99 a short, anonymous, paper entitled ‘Some New Eastern Gingers’ (Ridley 1900). The paper contained descriptions of four species named as *Alpinia pectinata*, *Alpinia celebica*, *Amomum terminale* and *Tapeinocheilus koordersiana*. The only one of these names to appear in *Index Kewensis* is *Alpinia celebica*, which is attributed to K. Schumann in a publication of 1899 (though this was a *nomen nudum* only validated in 1904). Therefore, if these are validly published names, they require to be circulated to prevent the unwitting adoption of later homonyms when new names or combinations are put forward.

Validity of the Four Species

It is first necessary to establish the author of these names. This is not difficult. At the time of the paper's publication, H. N. Ridley was Director of the Singapore Botanic Gardens and a well-known authority on the Scitamineae (Zingiberales) of tropical Asia. The first sentence of the paper states: 'The following new species of *Scitamineae* have passed through my hands since writing the paper published in Journal No. 32 and do not appear in Schumann's paper.' Ridley (1899) published a monograph of 'The Scitamineae of the Malay Peninsula' in the *Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* No. 32, pp. 85–184, leaving no doubt that Ridley must be the author of the 'New Eastern Gingers'. The Schumann paper referred to is probably K. Schumann's '*Monographie der Zingiberaceae von Malaisien und Papuasien*' (Schumann 1899).

The species descriptions of the four gingers are written in English, which does not invalidate the names for a publication of this date. The descriptions are reasonably detailed, certainly sufficiently so, to make rejection of the names on such grounds untenable. Finally, there is the problem of typification. There is no specific mention of herbarium specimens directly associated with any of the species described. Instead after the diagnosis of each species there is a locality stated. For three of the species this is Celebes (the former name of Sulawesi), with the following extra information being given for *Alpinia pectinata*: 'at Gunong Klabat 1300 to 1600 metres elevation, fruiting in January.' The fourth species, *Amomum terminale*, is referred to as from 'Bismarck Archipelago (Micholitz.) Flowered in Botanic Gardens, Singapore, Feb. 1900.' Micholitz is known to have collected in the Bismarcks (van Steenis-Kruseman 1950), and presumably he sent live material to Singapore for Ridley to have cultivated in the Botanic Gardens. The final sentence of the paper may offer a clue to the identity of the collector of the specimens that Ridley was sent from Celebes. He writes: 'I have great pleasure in associating it [the new species of *Tapeinochilos*] with the name of Dr. Koorders, who made such fine collections of plants in Celebes recently.' Koorders collected on Celebes in 1894–95 and visited Gunong Klabat on 17–19 January 1895 (van Steenis-Kruseman 1950). It seems highly probable therefore that the three species from Celebes described by Ridley should be typified by Koorders' collections.

Identity of Alpinia pectinata Ridl.

Unfortunately, a thorough search of the herbarium of the Singapore Botanic Gardens (SING) has failed to locate any likely material to typify any of

the four names. This may be accounted for by Ridley's opening reference to the new species as having 'passed through my hands.' Possibly, Koorders sent material to Ridley for naming but without sufficient duplicates, at least of some collections, for any material to be lodged at SING. The absence of any collections of the *Amomum terminale* grown in the Singapore Botanic Gardens is less easily explained.

A visit to Herbarium Bogoriense in Indonesia was more successful. A Koorders specimen exactly matching the collecting details indicated for *Alpinia pectinata* by Ridley was discovered. This we select as the lectotype for the species since it is determined '*Alpinia pectinata* Ridley' apparently in Ridley's hand and signed and dated by him 'Ridley 10.x.99.'

Smith (1990), in her synopsis of *Alpinia*, referred to *Alpinia pectinata* Ridl. as a *nomen nudum* first employed by Holthuis (in Holthuis & Lam 1942), who was given the name on material identified at Bogor. Smith identified the species as *Alpinia eremochlamys* K. Schum., which she claimed was only validly published in 1904, with the 1899 publication of the name representing a *nomen nudum*. We cannot agree with this conclusion. Name, diagnosis and type specimens are all included in the original protologue of *Alpinia eremochlamys*. We conclude that *Alpinia pectinata* Ridl. is valid, and represents a new synonym of *Alpinia eremochlamys* as summarized below:

Alpinia eremochlamys K. Schum., Bot. Jahrb. Syst. 27 (1899) 288. *Syntypes*: Sulawesi; Tomohon, *Sarasin* 412, 6 June 1894; Tondano, *A.B. Meyer s.n.*, May 1871; Kandari Peninsula, *Beccari*, May 1874.

Alpinia pectinata Ridl., J. Straits Branch Roy. Asiat. Soc. 34 (1900) 97 *synon. nov.*. *Type*: "Celebes at Gunong Klabat 1300 to 1600 metres elevation, fruiting in January," *Koorders* 19650β, 19 January 1895 (lectotype, selected here, BO!).

Three Unidentified Species

Type material for the three other Ridley names has yet to be found and we cannot therefore identify the species concerned with certainty, but we conclude that all three were validly published. However, it would be premature to propose any formal name changes or new synonyms. The full citation and Ridley's original diagnoses (with their idiosyncratic punctuation) of the three species are given below as an aid to others who may want to attempt to resolve the problem.

Alpinia celebica Ridl., J. Straits Branch Roy. Asiat. Soc. 34 (1900) 98. *Type*: "Celebes." [*non Alpinia celebica* K. Schum., Pflanzenr. 20 (1904) 362. *Type*: Sulawesi, Riedel s.n. (K!, lectotype, selected by Smith, 1990)].

'A (*Hellenia*) *Celebica* n. sp. A herb more than 18 inches tall with glabrous very long pointed lanceolate leaves, 8 inches long $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch wide, petiole terete striolate graceful one inch long ochrea oblong truncate. Panicle graceful erect branches short many flowered five inches long. Bracts caducous. Flowers $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch long. Calyx tubular truncate $\frac{1}{2}$ inch long. Corolla tube twice as long, lobes oblong obtuse $\frac{1}{2}$ inch long. Lip narrow shorter than corolla, deeply bifid, lobes spatulate emarginate. Staminodes narrow subulate. Stamen with a rather long filament, another [*sic*] oblong not crested. Style graceful.'

Amomum terminale Ridl., J. Straits Branch Roy. Asiat. Soc. 34 (1900) 98. Type: "Bismarck Archipelago (Micholitz.) Flowered in the Botanic Gardens, Singapore, Feb. 1900."

'*Amomum terminale* n. sp. Stems crowded slender about 2 feet tall, or much taller $\frac{1}{4}$ inch through. Leaves dark green, elliptic lanceolate acuminate thinly coriaceous pale beneath glabrous 7 inches long, 2 inches wide, petiole very short, ocrea [*sic*] $\frac{1}{8}$ inch long rounded. Spike terminal or basal cylindric 4 inches long $\frac{3}{8}$ inches through. Bracts ovate obtuse margins hairy $\frac{3}{4}$ inch long $\frac{1}{2}$ inch wide red. Bracteole $\frac{1}{4}$ inch long oblong obtuse pink. Flowers in pairs. Calyx tubular dilated upwards trifid pink $\frac{3}{4}$ inch long. Corolla tube one inch long slender white, lobes lanceolate acute $\frac{1}{2}$ inch long. Lip three lobed, two lateral lobes shorter curved outwards, acute, median obovate obscurely lobed, $\frac{1}{2}$ inch long. Anther with a broad connective rounded crenulate.'

Ridley added after the diagnosis:

'The habit of this plant and its red bracts cause it to resemble some species of *Zingiber*, but it has not the long anther beak of that genus. It is abnormal among *Amomums* in having the spike terminal, but it is also said to produce basal spikes from the rhizome. It is indeed difficult to refer it to any genus but I am unwilling to make a distinct genus for it alone. In some respects it may be classed with an ornamental plant known as *Costus Zebrinus* of gardens, which however has no relationship with the genus *Costus* at all.'

Tapeinochilos koordersianus Ridl., J. Straits Branch Roy. Asiat. Soc. 34 (1900) 99, *sphalm.* *Tapeinocheilus koordersiana*. Type: "Celebes."

'*Tapeinocheilus Koordersiana* n. sp. A tall plant, 25 feet tall. Leaves broadly oblong nearly four feet long 8 inches wide, subcoriaceous pubescent or glabrous narrowed at the base. Spike subcylindric 8 inches long, 4 inches wide. Bracts stiff coriaceous not woody oblong or ovate cuspidate ribbed pubescent the larger ones $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches long and one inch wide, the inner ones lanceate cuspidate pubescent longer. Bracteoles linear narrowed acute shorter than flowers. Calyx tube one inch long narrow little enlarged above, lobes lanceolate acute quite covered with silky hairs. Corolla tube hairy but little longer, lobes narrow acute. Lip oblong rounded hairy. Anther oblong hairy. Capsule an inch long obovate warted covered with brown wool.'

After is added:

'Another species of this grand Eastern island genus, allied to Miquel's *T. pungens* but with larger flowers and pubescent bracts.'

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